

ACTON SENIOR CITIZEN NEWS

SENIOR CENTER: 978-264-9643

February/March 2004

The COA Office/Senior Center is open weekdays 8 AM-5 PM.

The mailing address for the COA is: Town Hall, 472 Main St., Acton, MA 01720

The Acton Council on Aging Board will meet on Wednesday, February 11th and Wednesday, March 10th at 4:30 at the Senior Center, 50 Audubon Drive, S. Acton. All are welcome.

Health Plan Options for Seniors

Wednesday, March 3rd, at 1:00 p.m.

Melanie Miller, Senior Plan Consultant for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts will present an in-depth discussion of Medicare, and will also show how Medigap plans and Medicare HMO's work. Information about Prescription Advantage and Veteran's prescription benefits will also be included. A question and answer session will follow. All are welcome, regardless of your insurance coverage. Plan on joining us on **Wednesday, March 3rd at 1:00 and please call the COA office** to let us know that you will be joining this informative program. The **snow-date** for this program is Wednesday, March 31st at 1:00.

THE ACTON LIONS CLUB ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND BOILED DINNER

1:00 p.m., Sunday, March 21st

The Acton Lions Club cordially invites Acton and Boxborough senior citizens to a traditional New England boiled dinner on Sunday, March 21st, at the Acton Senior Center. Please call the Acton COA office, (978) 264-9643, by Thursday, March 18th with your **required reservation** and transportation request, if any. The sign-up for this luncheon is on a "first come, first served basis". Please call if you have to cancel, as we often have a waiting list. Parking is limited, so PLEASE CARPOOL if at all possible. We thank the Lions Club for providing this wonderful opportunity for good food, company and entertainment!

A "Madrigal" Celebration!

Wednesday, February 11th at 12:30

Please join us for a musical presentation by the Acton-Boxborough high school musical group "The Madrigal Singers" as they offer us a wonderful selection of love songs in honor of Valentine's Day. This group of talented students are looking forward to entertaining us again.

U.S. Congressman

Marty Meehan

Monday, March 22nd, at 12:30

Come hear **Congressman Marty Meehan** address the latest status of the prescription drug changes in the Medicare plan. This informative program will offer us details regarding these programs and where they are headed. **Please call the COA office to reserve a space.**

The Police Academy Returns!

The Police Academy returns for an eight-week session designed to educate and inform citizens about the inner workings of our police department as well as the legal and judicial systems. Classes run from **Wednesday, April 28th through Wednesday, June 16th, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.** Further details will be in the April newsletter but please call the COA office to **sign up** for this very popular program!

For more information on the Acton Council on Aging and Senior Center go to www.acton-ma.gov. Our monthly newsletter is also available at this web site.

Please save this two month newsletter

MINUTEMAN MEAL SITE

Minuteman Lunch is served Monday through Thursday at 11:45 a.m. Requested donation is \$2.00. To sign up for lunch, call 978-263-5053 by 11:00 the day before you wish to come. (Call the COA at 978-264-9651 for transportation.) **If you are unable to come, please call to cancel your meal.** The **February Birthday and Valentine's Lunch** will take place on **Wednesday, February 11th** and the **March Birthday lunch** will be held on **Wednesday, March 10th**. If your birthday is in **February or March**, you are invited to a complimentary lunch.

Storm and Bad Weather Alert: What a winter we're having!

In stormy weather, always call the Senior Center at (978) 264-9643 before coming for any classes or programs. We are not able to call everyone individually in a bad weather situation, so please check with us! We can tell you if we are canceling programs, classes, or van service or the information will be on our answering machine.

For Minuteman Meal Site and Home Delivered meals updates: Please turn to Channel 7 to find out if the meal site programs are canceled.

The Wayland Golden Tones Wednesday, March 17th at 12:45

You know and love this group so come enjoy them as they entertain us on St. Patty's Day! In addition, the COA's Choral Singers will join them for a few numbers!

Men's Breakfast

Friday, February 13th, 9:00 a.m.

Friday, March 12th, 9:00 a.m.

Please call the COA office by the Wednesday, prior to the breakfast, for a reservation; \$2.00 donation.

Ladies Lunch!

Friday, February 6th, at 11:30 a.m.

Friday, March 12th, at 11:30 a.m.

Come join us in February when we will enjoy homemade Turkey Noodle soup, dessert, coffee and tea along with your sandwich from home, if you would like! Please call the COA office by **Wednesday, February 4th** and **Wednesday, March 10th** to reserve a spot. Donation - \$1.50 please.

**The Council on Aging and the Acton Senior Center will be closed:
Monday, February 16th
President's Day**

Acton Public Health Nursing Service Programs for your health!

In February and March the Acton Public Health Nursing Service will bring programs to the Senior Center on **Tuesday, February 17th** and on **Wednesday, March 24th at 12:30**. In **February** the Nursing Service will discuss **heart healthy winter warm-ups**; some tips to keep your heart healthy in what you do and eat. In **March** the program will be a **diabetes update**; find out what is new in diabetes treatment and get your blood sugar taken.

Help for Fuel Expenses SMOC Fuel Assistance

Need help paying your heating bill?

New applications for fuel assistance for 2003/2004 are being taken **through April 30th**. If your yearly gross household income falls within the limits below, you may qualify for fuel assistance and discounts on utility and telephone bills.

Household size	Max yearly income
1	\$ 17,960
2	\$ 24,240

(Call for income guidelines for larger families)

Call Carol Steiner at the COA 978-264-9643 for more information.

Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program

Families can purchase one-time deliveries of discount home heating oil to help make ends meet over the winter months.

Call 1-877-563-4645 (1-877-JOE-4OIL)

As in any year, please contact your fuel supplier to obtain information about low cost/reduced cost fuel and weatherization programs.

The Friends of the Council on Aging manage an **Emergency Fuel Assistance Fund**; contact Jean Fleming at the COA for information about this and additional emergency funds available from the **Salvation Army.**

**REMEMBER TO CALL THE COA
OFFICE DURING INCLEMENT
WEATHER TO SEE IF CLASSES OR
TRIPS ARE CANCELLED
(978) 264-9643**

EXERCISE PROGRAMS

*******Winter Aerobics Registration*******

This session has started and some classes are filled. Please call the COA to register for the following classes.

Check calendar for days the Center is closed.

MONDAYS: "Stretch and Flex" with Terri Zaborowski (formerly "Fountain of Youth") Mondays from 8:45-9:45; runs through March 8th. **Please call the COA office to sign up for the next session which runs from March 29th to May 24th.** Start with a gentle exercise program and then progress to easy weight training with Therabands. Exercise has been shown to help restore your "youthfulness" with the added benefits of friendship and sociability.

AEROBICS with Terri Zaborowski-

These classes are filled. The next session begins the week of April 19th. Please call the COA office to sign-up for the next session of classes.

Senior Cardio-Flex:

Tuesday & Thursday from 9:00-10:00 or Wednesday & Friday from 9:00-10:00 –

Warm-up and stretch, aerobics and muscle conditioning then cool down segment.

Beginner to Intermediate Stretch-Flex:

Tuesday & Thursday from 10:15-11:15

Same as above, but at a lower-impact level.

FRIDAY T'AI CHI with Lynne Potts:

Intermediate/Advanced 11:00 a.m.–12:00.

Starts Friday, April 23rd and runs through Friday, May 28th. T'ai Chi is an ancient martial art whose movements are practiced in a slow and deliberate manner. New students with Tai Chi experience may join this class. This will be Lynne's last semester at the Acton COA so let's give her a big turnout!

Widows and Widowers

Friday, February 6th & March 5th, 1:30- 3:00

Recent widows and widowers are welcome to attend our informal group. Group members share experiences on losing a partner of many years and how to cope with all of the changes. Co-leaders are Carol Steiner and Steve Baran. Please call the COA if you have any questions about the group or would like to join us

Friendly Visitors Meeting

February 10th & March 9th 1-2:30

In the Senior Center living room

RSVP to Carol at (978) 264-9643.

COA VAN SCHEDULE

The Acton COA van is available to all Acton seniors (age 60 and over) and disabled Acton residents. The van is available Monday through Friday. **Reservations should be made weekdays between 8:00-12:00 noon by calling (978) 264-9651.** Please have the name, telephone number and address of your destination available when you call. Because of the number of requests it is necessary to **CALL AT LEAST A DAY in advance**, sooner if possible. **No out of town pick up after 2:30 p.m. One-way in town is \$1.00; one-way out of town (Concord/Maynard) is \$1.50.**

ASK THE LAWYER

Attorney Leslie Madge, a certified Elder-Law Attorney, offers **20-minute** private legal **consultations** at no charge to Acton seniors. She will next be in the Senior Center on **Monday, February 23rd from 1:00-3:00 p.m.**
Call the COA to schedule a consultation.

GOING AWAY FOR THE WINTER?

Please give us a call so we can temporarily take you off our mailing list while you are away. Unfortunately we cannot send newsletters out of town so please stay informed of upcoming events and trips by:

- *Calling our office at (978) 264-9643*
- *Calling your friends in Acton*
- *Check the website: www.acton-ma.gov.*

Please call us when you return and we will resume mailing the newsletter. Thank you.

COA GROUPS AND CLASSES

MONDAYS – Bridge Class – This session of classes runs through April 5th; **10:00-12:00** each Monday for class and continuous play.

Choral Singing – Monday, February 2nd and 9th, March 1st and 15th at 12:45. We sing for FUN, have a great pianist and song leader.

Join us! **We have been invited to join the Wayland Golden Tones** when they perform at the Senior Center on **Wednesday, March 17th**.

MONDAYS AND FRIDAYS - POKER: 1:00;
new players welcome! No Poker during Monday “One Stroke” Painting Classes.

MONDAY - Book Group: The Group will meet on **February 23rd** at 1:00 to discuss “**The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency**” by **Alexander McCall Smith** and on **March 29th** to discuss “**The DaVinci Code**” by **Dan Brown**. Copies may be available at the Acton Memorial Library. Consider bringing a friend! **Co-Leaders for the February meeting are Marion Maxwell and Mavis O’Brien. Co-Leaders for the March meeting will be Marion Maxwell and Phyllis Demers.** All are welcome at any gathering of “*The Bookies*”.

TUESDAY – Watercolor with Sue Nordhausen from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.; through April 27th. No class February 17th, March 23rd and April 20th.

WEDNESDAYS – Watercolor with Cynthia Durost– from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m.; through March 17th. Please call to register for the next session which runs from April 7th through May 12th.

✂Acton Senior Quilters✂

WEDNESDAYS, 10:15 to Noon: Self-directed quilting group meets to work on various projects. Quilters of all levels are welcome.

Ping-Pong/Pool: every day after 12:30. We are always looking for new players! Please check COA calendar for schedule conflicts in the dining room.

Knit & Crochet: Join us at 12:30 on **Wednesday, February 4th, 18th and 25th and March 10th and 24th**, as we welcome beginners and experts. You may work on your own project or choose to make a lap-gan to be donated to area nursing homes.

NEW PROGRAM OFFERINGS!

WEDNESDAYS – Watercolor Workshop for the Absolute Beginner with Cynthia Durost

Always wanted to paint but didn't have a clue about beginning? This workshop is for you! We will explore basic techniques of watercolor and composition, with “nitty gritty” information about how to hold and load the brush, color mixing, materials and other essentials. Don't be shy, this fun and relaxing workshop really is for those without prior experience. If you are currently enrolled in an art class this is not for you! **Wednesdays from 1:00-2:30, February 18th and 25th; March 3rd and 10th.** Call the COA office to register.

Memoirs Writing Group

Join this new group as we meet with **Jill Braceland of “Managing Change”** as she leads us through the mechanics of writing down our life stories. Ms. Braceland will join the group for the first three meetings to help it get off the ground and determine a structure that will keep it strong for the future. She will work with and guide us in memoir writing and grandparent journaling. The first three sessions will take place on **Wednesdays, March 31st, April 7th and April 14th from 1:00-2:30** and the group will move forward on a schedule it agrees upon. **Please call the COA office to register** for this terrific new opportunity!

“Afternoon at the Opera”

Plan to enjoy the next session of opera workshops with instructor Martin Segal. The spring classes on **Giuseppe Verdi** will include four domestic dramas of Verdi's middle career; *Stiffelio*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*. Each opera will be discussed according to its place in Verdi's long life and its story and music analyzed, along with a video presentation (including sub-titles in English) of the complete opera. Handouts and synopses will be available. There will be time for audience questions and opinions and a brief intermission is offered each afternoon. Come and enjoy these **four workshops on April 6th, 8th, 20th and 22nd from 1:00-3:30 p.m.** **Class is limited to 14 students, so please register with the COA office.**

...More New Offerings!!

Advanced Decorative Painting

This class will continue with an overview of what was learned in the fall semester and introduce the art of glass painting using special glass paints and conditioners. We will work mainly on individual projects and gifts from slates and note cards to wineglasses and decanters. Please bring all of your brushes to the first class. The instructor will provide all paints, glass conditioners and polyurethanes. **Monday afternoons from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., March 15th through April 26th.** Instructor Donna Lynch. Continuing or experienced students. Call the COA office to register.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR COMPUTER???

Is your computer acting up? Do you need advice on how to install, fix or configure something on your machine?

We are please to be offering this pilot program, **beginning March 4th**, to help you with a variety of computer problems. No question is too simple!

High school students will be available to offer advice on the phone every **Thursday afternoon, 3:00-4:15**. To speak with the tech desk, please call the COA at (978) 264-9643 and ask to speak to the tech assistant. If you can not call during those hours you may call anytime, leave your number and a tech assistant will get back to you the following Thursday afternoon.

Felted "Party Purses"

Wednesday, February 25th at 12:30

"Felting" is the hot, new way to finish a knitted project. Join us to knit a fast and easy small purse which will add pizzazz to any outfit! Stop in to the COA office to **register and to pick up your pattern and materials list as specific yarn** is needed to make the felting process possible. A second session to complete the purses is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 10th at 12:30**. Please join in as we each create unique treasures or gifts!

Genealogy "Re-groups"

The Group will reconvene on **Friday, March 12th at 1:30 p.m.** Instructor Suzanne Richardson will be returning with great information and there may be a field trip along the way. Please join this inquisitive group in the Senior Center living room. **Meeting dates: March 12th and 26th; April 16th and 30th; May 14th and 28th and June 11th and 25th.**

The Acton Senior Travel Group is planning a trip for the last week in April. Although details are not yet complete, the trip will be to the DuPont Estate in Delaware and then to either, the Brandywine Museum and Longwood Gardens, or to Cape May. Contact Florence Ross (978) 263-0944 or Angie Conn (978) 263-4225 of the Travel Group with any questions.

A \$50 deposit will be necessary to hold your spot; should be delivered to the COA office.

Winter Computer Workshops

A great variety of computer workshops are being offered throughout the winter months. There is still time to register for **"Advanced Excel" on February 10th; "Reserve, Order, Review Books on the Internet" on February 5th and "Internet Safety" on March 16th.** The Internet Safety class will talk about what you can do to keep your personal information private and how to feel safe using the Internet for research and gathering information. Watch the April newsletter for additional classes. **Contact the COA office to register.**

Gardening Group News!

This group of enthusiastic men and women met for the first time in January to start planning the group's events and meetings. They are anxiously awaiting spring but using these winter days to enjoy indoor gardening tips and information! Many in the group will be traveling to the **Maine Flower Show with the COA on March 4th** and then participate in a seed starting lecture and activity at **Russell's Garden Center in Wayland on Thursday, March 25th at 1:00**. All are welcome to join this new group but please call the COA office to sign up for the two March events. Watch the April newsletter for future meeting dates! Note, this group is not just for female gardeners!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Volunteer Spotlight is randomly drawn from over 175 volunteers.
For February and March we celebrate:

John and Joanne Butterworth

John and Joanne of Acton and Ossipee, NH have volunteered as Meals on Wheels drivers for about 3 years. Their wonderfully friendly style brightens every home they visit. Emerson Hospital also enjoys having them as transport volunteers for over 8 years!

They have enjoyed the Acton area since 1992 after John's retirement as a vice president in Liberty Mutual's life insurance operations.

Joanne's work life included being a medical and church secretary as well as the mother of two daughters. They have one grandson, Jack (named for his grandfather) and enjoy seeing him and their daughters as often as they can.

Meals on Wheels is a vital service to homebound seniors. John and Joanne's good will and dedication to volunteering is vital to the success of the program.

Join us in thanking them!

Lots of COA Volunteer Opportunities:

<i>Wheel-A-Meal Drivers</i>	<i>Friendly Visitors</i>
<i>Computer Teachers</i>	<i>Group Leaders</i>
<i>Handymen</i>	<i>Office Support</i>
<i>Men's Breakfast support</i>	<i>Knitters</i>
<i>Ladies Lunch Corps</i>	<i>Newsletter Mailers</i>
<i>Quilters...</i>	<i>AND ALWAYS MORE!</i>

Call Carol Steiner at the Council on Aging with questions and/or to volunteer.

Durable Equipment Loan Cellar

The Acton COA maintains a **cellar** of donated durable medical equipment, which can be loaned out to Acton seniors as needed. We appreciate all of your donations! Please call us if you have something you think we can use.

Tub benches and shower chairs are often in short supply so if you have one taking up valuable space, we would be glad to add it to the loan cellar.

At this time we cannot take any more commodes or standard walkers. We have plenty to loan.

Please do not "drop off" donations without calling ahead.

All donated equipment must be clean and in very good condition.

ACTON HANDYMAN PROGRAM

The Acton Handyman Program, staffed entirely by volunteers, is designed to help Acton senior residents with **small** repairs and **simple** household jobs. We encourage you to call with your "fix-it" requests and will be understanding as we help **prioritize** the jobs. We realize your families and friends are also stretched for time and energy, but we hope you are letting them know of your household needs as well.

Some jobs we can handle are:

- Glue loose handrails, chair legs, etc.
- Light bulb/smoke detector battery replacement
- Tacking down loose carpet for safety
- Unsticking doors and windows
- Basic carpentry
- Mattress flipping
- Simple computer, TV, VCR, DVD connections
- And more!

Call the COA to request Handyman service.

This well-used volunteer service should not take the place of hiring professional help for the multitude of jobs needed to set up a new household. We hope to suggest resources to help you find the help you need. Always check references before hiring any in home services.

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A TWO MONTH NEWSLETTER. SAVE IT TO ENJOY FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH. THE APRIL NEWS WILL ARRIVE IN LATE MARCH!

Health Insurance Counseling/SHINE

The SHINE Program, Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Elders, trains volunteers to **assist seniors with their health insurance and prescription drug concerns.** This invaluable program is administered by Minuteman Senior Services.

Please call the Acton Council on Aging office at (978) 264-9643 with your requests for this service and we will relay your information to the SHINE counselor for Acton, **Maryjane Costello. Maryjane will return your calls on Monday of each week,** unless it is critical that you speak with her sooner.

SENIOR CENTER CLINICS

Hearing: Thursday, February 12th and Thursday, March 11th, 1-3 p.m. at the Senior Center.

Fred Gerulskis conducts hearing tests, checks hearing aids and makes some repairs. Free. **Please call** to register.

Podiatry Clinic: Friday, February 6th, Friday, March 5th and April 2nd; 8-10:00.

Sponsored by the Acton Nursing Service.

There is a charge of \$20.00*. The purpose of the clinics is to provide podiatry services that are not covered by insurance. Dr. Teresa Burtoft, DPM, provides basic services such as evaluation and nail clipping. *This clinic is funded by the Friends of the Acton Nursing Service. Fee can be waived in case of financial hardship.

Call 978-264-9653 for an appointment for Podiatry and Cholesterol Clinics.

Cholesterol Screening: This clinic will be held on Tuesday, March 16th from 9:00-12:00.

Please call the Nursing Service at 978-264-9653 if any questions. Fee \$10.00

Blood Pressure: Tuesday, February 10th, Tuesday, March 9th, between 9 and 11 a.m.

The Acton Public Nursing Service sponsors free monthly blood pressure clinics at the Senior Center. No appointment is necessary.

"Staying Connected" **Prevention Tip of the Month** **"Safety and Security"**

If you are exhausting your funds for in-home care, consult the COA outreach worker, a geriatric care manager or an elder care attorney. These professionals can assist you in exploring all options if you wish to remain at home. You do not want to lock yourself into an arrangement that limits your freedom of choice. Do not accept personal care in return for transfer or assignment of property or assets unless you have an attorney representing you and your interests. This should be a last option. In this type of situation the quality of care has been known to drop dramatically. If you choose this option your attorney can draft a document that gives you as much protection as possible. *This information has been provided by Minuteman Senior Services.*

Senior Cinema: Thursdays at 12:45 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 5th: "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"- Hysterical wedding of a Greek bride to a "non-Greek" groom. HUGE hit in the theaters. 2002

Thursday, Feb. 12th: "Alex & Emma" – Gambling writer hires stenographer to help get his manuscript completed and a relationship evolves. Kate Hudson, Luke Wilson. 2003

Thursday, Feb. 19th: "Le Divorce" –

Stepsisters with marital problems, romantic comedy. Kate Hudson, Naomi Watts. 2003

Thursday, Feb. 26th: "Secondhand Lions" – A 14 year-old boy is left to spend the summer of 1960 with two eccentric great uncles in Texas. Touching comedy; Robert Duvall, Michael Caine, Haley Joel Osment. 2003

Thursday, March 4th: "Open Range" – Four men living in the Wild West band together to rid their town of a rancher who's created an outlaw principality using brute force and scare tactics. Keven Costner, Robert Duvall, Annette Bening. 2003, rated R.

Thursday, March 11th: "Winged Migration" – Oscar-nominated nature movie. A team of filmmakers spent 3 years in 40 countries capturing the migratory patterns of birds.

Thursday, March 25th: "Radio" – True story of a 40 year friendship between a football coach and a mentally challenged man at a South Carolina high school. Ed Harris, Cuba Gooding, Jr. 2003.

Movie Mania Returns! **A Day of Movies and Pizza**

On Friday, March 19th join us for two great movies! At 10:00 we will show a new release "Runaway Jury", enjoy pizza and drinks for \$1.50/slice at 12:30 and then watch another new release "Under the Tuscan Sun" at 1:00. "Runaway Jury" is about a jury member in a landmark lawsuit against a gun manufacturer and his conspiracy with another jury member to swing the verdict. "Under the Tuscan Sun" loosely follows the book about a San Francisco author who seeks solace on a Tuscan vacation, falls in love and buys a villa. 2003.

Please call to reserve your space and order your pizza!

AARP Free Tax Preparation

The American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) will be sponsoring a free tax preparation service (simple tax returns) from February through mid-April at the Senior Center in Acton as well as the Acton Memorial Library. **Please call the Council on Aging at 978-264-9643 to schedule appointments at the Senior Center.** Library appointments can be made by calling 978-264-9642.

Taxpayers filing the basic forms (such as 1040EZ, 1040A or 1040 with schedules A, B, D, R, Earned Income Credit, or Estimated Tax Payments) may be accommodated. Trained preparers will answer tax questions or provide assistance in preparing returns. This service **will not include** preparing business returns, passive activities, giving investment advice, calculating asset bases or complex schedule D calculations, i.e. wash sales, puts, calls, etc. At the tax preparer's discretion other unusual situations may not be accommodated. It is very important that you bring all Federal and State tax returns for 2002 as well as all tax forms mailed to you for 2003, including W2, 1099R, 1099Div, 1099INT, 1099Misc, 1099SOCSEC, 1099B, mutual fund statements, brokerage statements, or other documents which might be related to the income tax return. If you are applying for the Circuit Breaker Tax Credit (MA), you need to bring a copy of your 2003 Real Estate tax bill with property assessment or a copy of your rental contract, plus 2003 sewer and water bills. Also, you must bring your Mass. Form #1 booklet.

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!
HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!**

Social Security Announces COLA for 2004

Beginning January 2004, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income recipients will receive a 2.1% cost of living adjustment (COLA) to their Social Security and Supplemental Security Income checks.

The Circuit Breaker (State) Tax Credit

Some seniors may be eligible to claim a **refundable credit on their state income tax** return for the real estate taxes they've paid in 2003. The maximum credit for tax year 2003 is \$810. To be eligible:

1. The taxpayer or spouse, if married filed jointly, **must be 65 years or older** at the close of 2003 tax year.
2. The taxpayer must **own or rent residential property in MA** and occupy the property as his/her **principal residence**.
3. The taxpayer's "**total income**" cannot exceed \$43,000 for a single filer who is not a head of household, \$54,000 for a head of household, or \$64,000 for taxpayers filing jointly.
4. The **assessed valuation** as of January 1, 2003 before residential exemptions but after abatements, of the homeowner's personal residence **cannot exceed \$432,000**.

Taxpayers who are eligible must file a completed schedule CB, Circuit Breaker Credit, with their state income tax return.

For further information, please contact the Acton Assessor's office at 978-264-9622 or the Dept. of Revenue's Customer Assistance Bureau at 617-887-MDOR or toll-free in MA at 1-800-392-6089 or www.mass.gov/dor.

Pharmacies to Begin Accepting Medicare Assignment on Diabetic Supplies

Walgreen's has announced that they will now accept Medicare assignment for diabetic supplies. Some of the CVS pharmacies are also accepting assignment. Customers should inquire at their local pharmacy to find out if that pharmacy does accept assignment and what items are covered.

The **Veteran Homestead Medical Van** is at Acton Town Hall on **the fourth Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** for health screenings and to address other health concerns.

COUNCIL ON AGING Trip Policies

1. Please call the COA office at 978-264-9643 to make trip reservations before sending in your check. Some trips fill up very quickly.
2. **Payment is required two weeks prior to the trip, unless otherwise noted.** If payment is not received in time, your name will be removed from the sign-up and a waitlisted person will be contacted. **We will return your check if you cannot go and if your place can be filled.**
3. **Checks** should be made out to: The **FRIENDS of the Acton COA.** You may deliver your check to the office or mail to: COA, Town Hall, 472 Main Street, Acton
4. **Please park** towards the **back** of the lower parking lot, away from the function hall **behind St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church, 89 Arlington Street.**
5. Please call Jean Fleming at 978-264-9643 for trip assistance from the FRIENDS.
6. **Always bring a copy of your FILE OF LIFE card with you on trips.** If you do not have it you may be denied a seat on the trip.
7. **When signing up for a trip it is expected that each traveler will participate in every aspect of a trip. Staying on the bus is not an option.**

Please call the COA office on Monday, February 2nd to sign up for trips.

2003/2004 Boston Symphony Orchestra Open Rehearsal Season

The next BSO Open Rehearsal will be held on **Thursday, February 26th**. Please call the COA to reserve your seat. We arrive at Symphony Hall in time to hear the introductory lecture and then enjoy the full rehearsal, returning to Acton about 2:00. You may bring a light snack or lunch to enjoy during the ride home.

February 26th: Herbert Blomstedt, conductor and Peter Serkin on piano. Mendelssohn Overture, *The Fair Melusine*; Mozart Piano Concerto No. 17 in G, K.453, Nielsen Symphony No. 4, *The Inextinguishable*.

April 1st: Grant Llewellyn, conductor and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus.

COST: \$25.00

Depart: St. Elizabeth's Church Lower Back Parking Lot at 8:00 a.m.

Spring Flower and Garden Show Di Millo's Floating Restaurant Thursday, March 4th

Join us for a great day of travel and help to bring a bit of spring hope into your winter! Our first stop will be for an early lunch at Di Millo's Floating Restaurant in Portland Harbor. This well known boat houses a fine restaurant and great scenery. Please indicate your choice of Baked Stuffed Chicken Breast or Broiled Haddock; there is always a vegetarian dish available, if desired.

We will travel to Scarborough Downs in Maine to enjoy the 2004 garden show "A Summer Garden in Maine", which certainly could work in Massachusetts! The show will feature garden exhibits, unique vendors, educational exhibits, a children's garden, food courts and more.

The show is located on one floor but there is a good deal of walking involved.

COST: \$44.50 (includes bus, full lunch, show admission, taxes and gratuities)

DEPART: 8:45 a.m. from St. Elizabeth's back parking lot. Approximate return 5:30.

The Red Lion Inn and The Norman Rockwell Museum Friday, May 7th

Travel west with us for lunch and shopping at The Red Lion Inn and then a guided tour of The Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Mass. We will arrive in Stockbridge about 11:00 a.m. to browse and shop before a lunch of Chicken Pot Pie or Shaker Style Beef in pastry is served at 11:30; vegetarian selections are always available. After lunch we will tour the Norman Rockwell Museum which will be featuring "Women in Illustration: Contemporary Visions" in addition to the permanent exhibit.

COST: \$48.00 (includes bus, lunch, museum admission and gratuities)

Depart: St. Elizabeth's Church Lower Back Parking Lot at 8:45 a.m., approximate return 5:30 p.m.

The TALL SHIPS at Quonset Point, RI Tuesday, July 20th

SAVE THE DATE! We will travel to Rhode Island to see the Tall Ships by water. Look for details and sign-up information in the April newsletter. This is not the time for sign-ups, just to save the date on your calendar! A great lunch will follow the tour.

Alzheimer's Services

Alzheimer's Association Helpline:
1-800-548-2111.

Monthly evening support group:

Wednesdays, February 18th and March 17th, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Acton Senior Center. For information, call Jean Fleming at (978) 264-9643.

Early stage Patient and Partner Support Group: First Tuesday of each month, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. Cooperative Elder Services Adult Day Center, at their new location at 7 Chamberlin Drive, Concord. Call Arlene Parillo at (781) 863-1166.

Monthly morning support group: Concord Park Assisted Living Residence in West Concord on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10:30. Call Pat Oliphant (978) 318-0046.

Cooperative Elder Services, Inc. runs an Adult Day Health and Alzheimer's Care Program at their center in Concord. Please call Pat Oliphant at (978) 318-0046.

Minuteman Senior Services provides, free of charge, an in-home consultation. Please call 978-263-8720 for more information.

"How to get the most out of your visit to the doctor" is a new program, presented by the Alzheimer's Association, to train consumers coping with Alzheimer's Disease how to communicate with their physician. This program, hosted by the Inn at Robbins Brook, will be held at 2:00 on Sunday, February 29th. Call (978) 264-4666 to register.

Caregivers' Support Group

A general support group for all caregivers in the area meets at Concord Park Assisted Living Residence on the 2nd and 4th

Thursdays of the month usually, from 11:00 to 12:30 p.m. The group leader is Carola Domar, LICSW. Please call her with any questions at (978) 318-3020.

"Dinner with Friends"

Concord Players

A free dress rehearsal of "Dinner with Friends" by Donald Margulies is being presented on **Thursday, February 12th at 8:00 p.m.** in the theater at 51 Walden Street. You are invited to enjoy this yuppie satire, romantic comedy and thought-provoking drama about modern-day relationships.

Notes from the Town Clerks Office

Dog License reminder: Town Bylaw requires that all dogs six months of age or more must be licensed by February 28, 2004. Failure to license a dog by the dead-line is subject to a \$25.00 fine in addition to the fee.

Presidential Primary: The Primary will be held on March 2nd, 2004 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The last day to register to vote or change party enrollment is February 11th, 2004.

Local Election/Town Meeting: Annual Town Election to be held on March 30th, 2004. Annual Town Meeting begins on April 5th, 2004. The last day to register to vote in the Town Election and the Town Meeting is March 10th.

Absentee Ballots: Absentee Ballots are available at the Clerk's Office 3 weeks before an election. You may request a ballot be mailed to you by sending a note with your name and Acton address, stating that you are requesting a ballot. YOU MUST SIGN the request and mail or bring it to the Town Clerk's Office, 472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720. Remember to give the "mail to" address if it is other than your Acton address.

Any questions please call the Town Clerk's office at (978) 264-9615.

Census forms have been mailed to all households. Please read the information, make any corrections, and return the form to the Clerk's office. You may also drop the forms off at the libraries or the COA office.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A TWO MONTH NEWSLETTER. IT COVERS THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH!

How to Order Medicare Publications

There are several ways to order publications:

1. Call 1-800-MEDICARE, or 1-800-633-4227.
2. Fax your order for a specific Medicare publication to (410) 786-1905 and include your complete mailing address, phone number and quantity of publications needed, as well as preferred format (Braille, audiotape, or large print).
3. Order Medicare publications through <http://www.medicare.gov/> and click on "Publications". You can order one copy of a particular publication by filling in the online order blank, or download your publication selection to your printer.
4. Order Medicare publications as a CMS publications mailing list customer by going to <http://cms.fu.com/maillinglist> (no "www"). New subscribers can access this convenient online publications ordering service using a first-time account setup password: CMS9.

New publications include:

- Medicare Basics-A Guide for Caregivers
- Medicare Coverage for Ambulance Services
- Medicare Coverage Outside the U.S.

ACTON COA STAFF

Jean, Fleming, Director

Barbara Winders, Assistant to the Director

Carol Steiner, Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator

Debby Mozzicato, Program Coordinator

Ron Paskavitz, Van Driver

Steve Ryan, Substitute Van Driver

Senior Work Program

The Senior Work Program employs senior citizens on a temporary basis within the departments of Acton's municipal government. \$750 can be earned each fiscal year with the goal of assisting seniors with their real estate taxes. Please contact the Council on Aging for an application.

Tickets for the Shrine Circus

Again this year, we have 10 free tickets to the Friday, April 30th performance of the Circus available in the COA office. The show is at 2:00 p.m. Transportation will not be provided for this event. Please stop by to pick up a ticket or two if you would like to attend this annual event.

Junior High Writing Project in March

50+ Junior High Students are seeking writing partners for a two letter correspondence with Acton seniors. Coordinated by Vicki Weeks at the Junior High and Carol Steiner at the COA, the students will use the letters to put together a mini-biography and will invite their penpals to a presentation of their finished projects. These R.J.Grey Jr. High students are eager to connect with people in their community and are looking forward to an interesting and meaningful project. Please call Carol (or email at csteiner@town.acton.ma.us) at 978-264-9643 to participate in this community based project.

"Senior Moment or Alzheimer's Disease: What is memory loss?" will be presented by Joanne Chaulk, RN, BS, at the **Inn at Robbins Brook on Thursday, February 5th, 7:00-8:00 p.m.** Please call (978) 264-4666 If you plan to attend.

Your Legislators

U.S. Senate: Edward "Ted" Kennedy

Phone: (202) 224-4543

(617) 565-3170 (Boston)

E-mail: senator@kennedy.senate.gov

John Kerry

Phone: (202) 224-2742

(617) 565-8519 (Boston)

E-mail: www.senate.gov and click on

John Kerry

U.S. House of Representatives:

(5th District of Massachusetts)

Marty Meehan

Phone: (202) 225-3411

(978) 459-0101 (Lowell)

E-mail: martin.meehan@mail.house.gov

Massachusetts State Senate:

Pamela Resor

Phone: (617) 722-1120

E-mail: Pamela.Resor@state.ma.us

Massachusetts House of Representatives:

14th Middlesex District

(Acton precincts 1, 2 & 6)

Cory Atkins

Phone: (617) 722-2080

E-mail: Rep.CoryAtkins@hou.state.ma.us

37th Middlesex District

(Acton precincts 3, 4 and 5)-James B. Eldridge

Phone: (617) 722-2060

Rep.JamesEldridge@hou.state.ma.us

A big Thank You to the Friends of the Council on Aging for their donation of three new Dell computer systems to the Senior Center Computer Program! With the donation of a new IMAC last year, this brings our computer lab totally up to date, a big plus for students and teachers alike!

We are celebrating the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Acton Senior Center on Sunday, April 4th from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Please plan to join us (bring your family and friends too!) that afternoon as we celebrate this special place where many of you come each week to exercise, learn new skills and information, eat together, socialize, have fun! More details will be in the April newsletter, but **please mark this date and time on your calendar now!**

**ACTON COUNCIL ON AGING
Town Hall, 472 Main Street
Acton MA 01720
Return Service Requested**

The **NARA Park beach** will be opening for the season on Saturday, May 29th and beach memberships will be available beginning in February. As in previous years senior memberships are available at a substantial discount to those 65 and over. You may obtain a membership by filling out the Beach Registration form located in the Spring/Summer Program which will be mailed in February or stop in at the Recreation Department office in Town Hall.

Book Sale Scheduled for January 30th – February 1st

The Friends of the Acton Libraries will hold their Winter Book Sale on Friday, January 30th through Sunday, February 1st at the Acton Memorial Library. The Preview Sale for Friends members is Friday night from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. The Book Sale is open to the general public Saturday, January 31st 9:00 – 4:50 p.m. Sunday, February 1st is “Give Away Day” from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

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